ing throws a clearer light upon it or more surely establishes the proportions of the whole. Thus, in certain paintings of Mcmling or Quentin Metzys a small convex and dark mirror reflects the interior of the room in which the scene of the painting is taking place. Likewise in Velazquez's painting of the *Meninas* (but somewhat differently). Finally, in literature, in the play scene in *Hamlet,* and elsewhere in many other plays. In *Wilhelm Meistcr*[7] the scenes of the puppets or the celebration at the castle. In *The Fall of the House of Uslier*[8] the story that is read to Roderick, etc. None of these examples is altogether exact What would be much more so, and would explain much better what I strove for in my *Cahiers,* in my *Narcisse,* and in the *Tentative,,* is a comparison with the device of heraldry that consists in setting in the escutcheon a smaller one *"en abyme"* at the heart-point.

That retroaction of the subject on itself has always tempted me. It is the very model of the psychological novel. An angry man tolls a story; there is the subject of a book. A man telling a story is not enough; it must be an angry man and there must be a constant connection between his anger and the story he tells.

All my efforts this year have been directed toward this one hard task: to free myself at length from everything useless and narrow with which an inherited religion had surrounded me to limit my nature, without however repudiating any of the many elements that could still improve and strengthen me.

Perhaps, rather than Petrarch, I should translate the *Vita Ntiova* of Dante.

The Christian soul is always imagining battles within itself. After a short time one never can understand just why. . . . For, after all, the vanquished is always a part of oneself, and this makes

for useless wear and tear. I spent my whole youth in opposing two parts of myself which perhaps only sought to come to an agreement. Through love of strife I fancied struggles and divided my nature.

13 *September*

Goethe. Do we now say, then, that happiness can be achieved through suppressing scruples? No. Suppressing scruples is not enough to make one happy; it takes something more than that. But scruples are enough to keep us from happiness; scruples are moral fears which our prejudices prepare for us. Each one of us is a misunderstood harmony;

[7] A novel of biographical interest by Goethe,
[8] One of Edgar Allan Foe's *Tales.*